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The University's first Eco Racing Team



Dow@Cam is a magazine, which is published bi-annually by the Downing College Development Office.

Editorial Team

Editor in Chief:

Professor Barry Everitt

Publication Co-ordinator:

Mrs Helen Machin

Writer:

Mrs Zoe Browne

Contributors:

Mr Tariq Sadiq

Miss Annie Vernon

Editorial Board:

Professor Barry Everitt

Mr Tariq Sadiq

Ms Jane Perks

Professor Graham Virgo

Dr Guy Williams

Miss Amy Goymour

Mrs Helen Machin

Photographers:

Mr Richard Stibbs

Ioana Marinescu

Peter Spurrier

Mark Read

Design and printing:

H2 Associates

Address:

Development Office

Downing College

Cambridge CB2 1DQ

Tel: 01223 334850

Email: hjl26@cam.ac.uk

Website www.dow.cam.ac.uk

Dow@Cam is intended to give an informative, light-hearted view of College related events and people.

Cover:

Children supported through Camfed's Safety Net Fund in rural Zambia.
photography: Mark Reade/Camfed



The Master's Voice

I write this having just returned from a very enjoyable visit to Hong Kong, which coincided with the Vice Chancellor's reception there for the University's 800th anniversary, where I met alumni and friends at a wonderful reception, at meetings in their offices and even on a junk! This was followed, as soon as I returned home, by another opportunity to meet 170 of our alumni at the annual Reunion Dinner, held in the beautifully restored Hall.

It is always a pleasure to meet our alumni and to hear about your careers and lives as well as the affection with which you remember your time at Downing. But in the present, it was difficult not to talk about and to be preoccupied with the financial crisis facing us. Downing has not been spared, of course, and we face an extremely difficult and challenging time ahead in ensuring that we are able to continue delivering first rate teaching and an exceptional environment for current and future generations of Downing students.

The effects of this financial crisis are felt by us all, but it will be the poorest and most vulnerable in the world who will suffer most. This issue of Dow@Cam reveals how some of our alumni, including Bill Adams (who is also a Professorial Fellow in the Geography of Conservation and Development at Downing), Nandu Patel and John Stewart, together with charities such as Camfed International (University of Cambridge's 800th Anniversary Charity of the Year) are intensifying their efforts to alleviate poverty, sustain the environment and tackle the devastating problems that have arisen in countries such as Zimbabwe.

In continuing our series of articles about current Fellows, Dr. Simone Laqua-O'Donnell describes her research on lives of women in post-Reformation Germany. Simone will be leaving us in the summer to take up a permanent post at the

University of Birmingham. We have been very fortunate to have had such an outstanding Research Fellow in the College, and wish her every success in her future career. Also in this issue, Nigel Brown describes his fascination with the frequently underestimated impact of ancient Greek and Latin words in everyday language even though, as he discusses, their meanings are not entirely clear.

In celebrating outstanding success of a different kind, Olympic silver medallist, Annie Vernon, writes compellingly about her rowing career and great achievement in the women's quadruple scull in Beijing. She reveals here that she has decided to commit herself to another four years of intense training for the London Olympics in 2012 and I am sure has the best wishes of us all. Meanwhile, another Downing rower, the former Captain of Boats and current Women's Captain, Laura Hughes, is training for her epic journey across the Australian outback as part of the University's first eco-racing team.

It has again been a pleasure to hear and read that the time you spent at Downing as students has been of key importance in determining the pattern of such diverse lives and careers. This is why we must ensure that the College comes through the present, difficult financial period and continues to provide and enhance the special environment of scholarship, excellent teaching and social cohesion that I hope that you experienced when here.

And finally, Dr Philip Rubery retired on March 31st after 36 years as a Fellow, committed supervisor of medical students during that entire period, tutor and prize-winning teacher of Biochemistry. He will greatly be missed at Downing, and we wish him every happiness.

The long and bumpy road ahead



How are institutions like Cambridge University working with NGOs to alleviate poverty in Africa? Who is setting the agenda, and what impact does female education have on the progress of developing countries? Dow@Cam talks to the Deputy Director of Camfed International (Cambridge University's Charity of the Year), Lucy Lake, social entrepreneur and investment banker, Nandu Patel, and Fellow of Downing and Moran Professor of Conservation and Development in the Department of Geography, Bill Adams about their work and finds out to what degree the current economic turmoil is affecting their projects.

Dow@Cam: To what extent did your own education influence what you're doing now, in terms of your employment, charity work and research?

BA: I would never have gone to Africa if I hadn't been at Downing and been supervised by Dick Grove. I was here as an undergraduate and I think the teaching about development and Africa was critical.

LL: I feel very privileged with the education I had; juxtaposed with my time spent working as a teacher in Zimbabwe and a growing awareness of the impact that a denial of education can have on young people, I decided to pursue this cause through Camfed.

NP: My background took me to Africa but education led me here and back again. I did Economics and in my final year decided to bias in development economics. It allowed me to understand the issue of globalisation, the role of agriculture in Africa as well as other developing countries.

Dow@Cam: Let's explore the idea that education, in particular that of girls, is the single best investment that can be made in developing countries.

LL: Once we start working with a group of girls, we're with them all the way through, even beyond school. Just seeing the impact of education, in terms of the reduction of family size, income levels, their control over resources within the family, and how they're using those resources to

support the education of the next generation of children. There is incredible evidence of the returns of that investment.

Dow@Cam: Is this concentrated focus on girls' education in any way in conflict with traditional African cultural values?

NP: I don't think it's an African problem; it's prevalent in the Indian sub-continent too. Traditionally, girls marry and move off into another family whereas boys will be educated, get a

job and continue to put money back into the existing family. The role of education, I think, is as much about educating the family in order to break down cultural obstacles.

LL: We have a saying in Camfed that 'it's not the poverty of culture, it's the culture of poverty' that defines many of these decisions. Families need all hands on deck to support their survival. One of the reasons why we have worked in different areas and communities is to demonstrate that once you get the process right, girls



Mark Read/Camfed

are in school alongside boys, regardless of culture or religion. Take the poverty barriers away and the other barriers fall away too.

BA: As households get poorer, children tend to stop going to school. Every country in Africa has made huge efforts to achieve universal primary education but it's hard. Roofs are blown off schools, there's no water and teachers get sick. Funding students as Camfed does is good, not least because it encourages others to get schools up to scratch.

LL: There are many areas where there are absolutely no educated female role models. Until that changes, it's very difficult for people to make a judgement on the value of investing in a girl.

NP: When Tanzania became independent, President Julius Nyerere tried to make his society as balanced as possible. His government had a large number of female government ministers/civil servants, for example. I don't believe that this has happened as quickly in some other countries. In African society, politics is so much more intertwined in general day-to-day behaviour. Successful women can act as role models, giving other women something to aspire to.

Dow@Cam: Bill, tell us more about your Kenyan conservation project.

BA: It was set up with funding from DEFRA through the Darwin Initiative, as a collaboration between Kenyan NGOs dealing with human/elephant conflict. An important part of the project has involved developing and disseminating techniques to strengthen communities' ability to defend their fields against elephants.

Now the Dutch government has paid for one of the NGOs to put an electric fence across the district, separating the elephant friendly ranches from the elephant unfriendly smallholder farming areas. So we've been working with them to help set up community organisations to work with the various ranches to help maintain the fence. A lot of the project has ended up dealing

with the familiar problem of how you support people to work together to agree goals and to help them do it.

For years, those of us outside of the continent have set its conservation agendas, but I think we'll start to see an African based choice about what should be conserved and what shouldn't. But you can't do much about conservation in Africa until you work out what to do about poverty.

Dow@Cam: It's also about managing resources for the future, isn't it?

BA: Yes. The link between the conservation and poverty debates is people, and the capacity of African people to identify problems and solve them in ways that work. A critical challenge is to build that human capacity in terms of education in ways that can unleash the power of positive change.

LL: We're working with Cambridge University on a programme in Zambia which looks at how best to enable young women who are coming through the formal education system to have opportunities opened up beyond that – not just formal opportunities, but entrepreneurship and business training. We've also been working closely with The Global Footprint network to find out how businesses can be generated locally and sustainably by local women to help them stay in their own communities. At the moment moving out is seen as the only way to move up.

NP: We support a charity in India called Servants of the People. In 1981, one of the trustees decided to create a wing just for women called Sisters of the People which supports pre-school education for female slum children in Delhi, giving them access to 25 different schools in 15 locations. They also support tailor training schools to train women to become tailors.

Dow@Cam: How do you measure the impact of what you do in terms of the goals you set yourselves and what you see?

NP: We support a handful of local charities in countries where we know the people and the work they're doing. For example, we support a charity in South Africa that provides scholarships for children to attend seven different schools in the Cape region. We sponsor 10 children and get regular photos and progress reports. It's our aim to continue sponsoring those children through primary and secondary school. We've not been around for long so it'll be a few years before we start to see the benefits of that continual investment.

LL: We are focused on getting today's generation of children into school and we measure our effectiveness in terms of how many children we can support with the money that we have. Last year, that was just over 400,000. We have the details of every child, how much they're being supported, their school attendance rates, so that we can monitor and address problems as they arise.

We've just completed a major study across Zambia and Tanzania looking at how our investment has changed in the communities that we've been working with compared to that in communities that we're going to be working in. There's been a substantial shift in the control that young women have over the resources that they're now bringing into the family and the number of children they're choosing to have. One of the most significant things is that young women who had been supported through school by Camfed are now reaching out and supporting other children in their communities who otherwise wouldn't have gone to school. Last year that was over 48,000 children.

Dow@Cam: what effect is the global economic and banking crisis having on charitable giving?

NP: We're not a fund-raising charity but, like any good charity, we invest for the long term. In addition, part of my day job in private wealth management is managing money for charities. With market conditions and the credit crunch, clearly many charity portfolios have gone down, and falling interest



rates mean they're not generating much income. Feedback from some of the charities I work with is that there have been real issues developing as a result of equity markets falling, in terms of cutting back expenditure and grants, and raising funds from the external communities.

LL: We'll see the real impact, not in 2009 but probably in 2010/11. Certain major organisations are already taking quite drastic steps. Programmes at the level at which they're delivering support to people are being cut drastically and suddenly. We are committed to not taking this approach but instead to maintaining our commitment to girls and their communities.

NP: The developed world has a long history of philanthropy and charitable giving. One of the areas of growth over the last five to ten years has been the emerging markets, where there has been a lot of new and substantial wealth creation. Many organisations were trying to educate and encourage the wealthy to give to or create foundations. This credit crunch is very much a developed and emerging market problem so a lot of that wealth has significantly declined, and with it another source of potentially large fundraising.

Dow@Cam: How could institutions like Cambridge University do more to alleviate poverty?

BA: In the world of learning and scholarship there is a real need to focus on issues like poverty and sustainability. There is a real potential through the courses that are taught, and these issues ought to be taught much more broadly than they are. Despite the excellence of the education at Cambridge, we don't systematically seek to turn people out who have an understanding of global sustainability and development problems and how to solve them.

The Centre for African Studies has very lively links with African academics, and there are both Masters and PhD students from Africa at Cambridge. So there are things that we are doing, although we could do more. The real

question surrounding sustainability and poverty is how learning should be organised. We're stuck in Victorian and Edwardian disciplinary structures, it's how we're all trained to think. Cambridge is rightly famous for its scholarship within conventional disciplines, but less so at inter-disciplinarity. There are exciting innovations in a number of areas, conservation being one of them. Actually delivering on this is extremely difficult.

Camfed, the Campaign for Female Education, is the University's charity of the year. It is dedicated to fighting poverty and HIV/AIDS in rural Africa by educating girls and investing in their economic independence and leadership once they complete school. For more information visit:

<http://uk.camfed.org>



Bill Adams



Lucy Lake



Nandu Patel

Biographies in brief

Bill Adams, Fellow of Downing and Moran Professor of Conservation and Development in the Department of Geography

Bill was an undergraduate at Downing between 1973 and 1976, returning as a PhD student between 1979 and 1982, then again as a Fellow and Assistant Lecturer in 1984. He has since supervised and taught students from Africa who have then gone on to work in conservation related areas. He is also involved with the Cambridge Programme for Industry and was one of the Professors chosen to teach Princes William and Harry in October 2008.

Lucy Lake, Deputy Executive Director & Director of Programmes, Camfed International

Lucy joined Camfed in 1994 after completing a degree in Human Sciences at Oxford University. A former teacher in a rural secondary school in Zimbabwe she now coordinates the development of Camfed's programmes. Lucy was nominated young entrepreneur of the year in 2002 in the New Statesman and featured in '50 Women to Watch' published by the Guardian in 2003. In 2007, she was nominated as one of 35 top young business women in the UK by Management Today. You can find out more about Camfed's work at <http://uk.camfed.org>

Nandu Patel, social entrepreneur, investment banker and Downing alumnus

Nandu studied Economics at Downing between 1983 and 1986, before joining his family's insurance business in Kenya. In 1989, he enrolled at business school at INSEAD in Fontainebleau, completing his MBA in 1990. Nandu now works for Morgan Stanley Private Wealth Management where he looks after UK charity and private client relationships. He also set up and funded a UK registered charity along with three other trustees, which funds a number of local African and Indian charities.

Sterling Silver

Annie Vernon did the College and the Country proud when she took silver in the quad sculls at the Beijing Olympics in 2008. Matriculating in 2001 to read History, Annie came to Downing from Wadebridge School in Cornwall, one of three counties with which Downing has a special relationship for widening participation. She tells Dow@Cam about her Olympian adventure.



Annie Vernon, 2nd from right, with her team

It's been nearly nine months since I stood on the Olympic podium having a silver medal hung around my neck, and it seems a lifetime ago. When I sat down to write this article, I started by re-reading the emails that I'd sent out to family and friends prior to and during the Games itself, and it sent a shiver down my neck as I stepped back in time and remembered how I'd felt in that fortnight in Beijing. That combination of awe, humility, excitement, terror, opportunity, pride and sheer panic that sums up the Olympic Games.

We formed our racing crews in April 2008 after a tough winter, and as reigning world champions, there was

only one medal that we were interested in. We raced twice previous to the Games, and absolutely blitzed the first regatta where we won by a commanding margin over our two biggest rivals, the Germans and the Chinese. However, three weeks later we were beaten by the Chinese in the Swiss mountain town of Lucerne. They had responded aggressively to their defeat and it was up to us now to do the same. There's nothing I like more than a challenge, and in fact I relished the gauntlet they'd thrown down. We went back to basics and headed to Beijing confident that we were doing everything we could to put our best race together on the 17th August 2008.

Beijing itself was an incredible experience start to finish; everything about it blew me away – the Olympic Village, all the other athletes from different sports and countries, the Olympic rings, the rowing lake itself, and all the emotion and the passion that was expressed every day as others went through their own personal campaigns. It immediately became clear to me just what it meant to be an Olympian, and just the level of mutual respect between us all, unrelated to how you did or in what sport. I felt like all my rowing had been building towards that point and I was ready to give the performance of my life. We won our heat and had a week to wait until the final.

The date of 17th August 2008 had been burned into my mind for years, and finally it had arrived. The morning of the race felt like no other day; I wasn't nervous but I just felt ready. I felt like all the training had been done, all the talking had been done, we were just ready to race. I wanted the final to be the best performance of my life; I wanted everything I'd ever done, all my achievements, the highs and lows, my history, my background, to come out in that race. I wanted my Olympic final to be the absolute sum of my experiences; it was less about sport and more about character.

The race itself went exactly to plan for 90% of the way. We came out strongly, established a lead, and coming through the 500m marker I remember feeling very confident. We still held a good lead moving into the last quarter; but then with maybe two or three hundred metres remaining, suddenly the Chinese started to rip through us and we had nothing to respond with. Their burst of speed was quite phenomenal and we had no idea they were capable of that. We called everything we had but suddenly the line arrived and we'd lost.

Initially you feel empty and numb; disbelief that it was over and that we'd been beaten after having such a good row. There's a part of you that wants to try to rationalise it; but at the same time it's the Olympic Games – there is no second chance and there's nothing you can say to make it better. That feeling of numbness lasted for most of the second week of the Games when we hit the partying hard, and it wasn't until after it was all over and I'd left Beijing that I could really put it all in context. I think there's a part of me that will always be gutted at the result; but there's a far greater part of me that is so proud of what we did on that day. The old saying that success is a journey not a destination I think rings true here. I would far rather a hundred times have led the race for 90% of the way and lost, than come from nowhere to grab a silver on the line. And I have to celebrate my silver. There are hundreds of amazing sportswomen who have never stood on an Olympic podium – Paula Radcliffe for one – and if the Olympics is the biggest stage in sport, then for a Cornish

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farming girl to have come second on that stage isn't bad going.

Since the Games, I took a series of long holidays and put as much distance between me and my oars as possible; but after finally coming to terms with everything, I've decided to have another crack at it. It sounds

contradictory, but it's not the gold I'm after, it's the lure of the gold: it's the journey and the struggle which is what you remember, not the result at the end of it. And having been through it once, I know it is utterly worth four years of hard work, sacrifice and pain just to have the chance to sit on that Olympic start line again.



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Faith without limits

Weeks after the inauguration of Zimbabwe's power-sharing administration, human rights organisations are still bearing the brunt of the country's political violence, with supporters increasingly vulnerable to beatings, abduction and torture. Downing graduate in Social and Political Sciences (1973) and former Vice Chair and Acting Director of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Forum, John Stewart, speaks about his work, hopes, and the moment he fled the country he loves.



"Either you succumb to fear and close yourself in or you accept there are things that are dangerous and you take precautions. But you can't eliminate fear. You can't prevent things if they are going to happen."

It's a sobering insight into the world of a man who raised his family in Zimbabwe when it was a cosmopolitan society with 90% literacy, a thriving economy and vibrant professional community. A recent report by the United Nations calculated that unemployment now stands at 94%. Eighty percent of the country's professionals are in exile, cholera is rampant and food is in critically short supply. At the beginning of this year, a one trillion dollar note was worth just

20 pence; the currency so devalued that the US dollar has now become its unofficial but effective replacement.

Labour of love

John Stewart has dedicated more than 20 years, compromising his personal safety, to do whatever it takes to ensure the transition of Zimbabwe back to a country that meets the needs of its people.

South African in origin, John studied Social and Political Sciences at Downing between 1973 and 1976. "Downing at that time comprised mainly engineers and lawyers, so somebody studying social sciences was a fairly rare individual," says John with a smile.

Cambridge was and still is home in England. John was born when his father was here, he went to primary school (Newnham Croft for two years) and secondary school here. It's also where John first became involved with the anti-apartheid movement, and other organisations that were helping refugees and exiles from Chile, Argentina and Bolivia.

But John's heart was in Africa so in 1978 he became a United Nations volunteer and went to Brazzaville in the Congo. Two years later, he returned to Zimbabwe to be near his family and, after a spell as the Acting National Director of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, spent the next nine years as a science teacher in Harare.



Trusting in providence

In 1992, at a time when the war in Angola was escalating and the South African transition was underway, John was appointed the Southern African International Affairs Representative for a Quaker organisation. His job was to interpret war and violence, and to find ways to bring divided people together to discuss issues such as the demobilisation of soldiers and banning landmines, then feeding information into offices in Geneva and New York that worked with the UN. Softly spoken, John is a firm believer in the Quaker principle of speaking truth to power: that despite having a tiny footprint in a vast territory with a population of over 140 million, he needs to speak directly to people in power and that they need to speak directly to him.

Tragically, it was also during this time that his sister, an agronomist and cattle breeding expert who was working with ANC military intelligence, was shot and killed in South Africa: the result of politically motivated violence. The family was devastated. John and his wife later adopted her son, completing their family with a daughter a few years later.

John left the Quakers in 1998 and in Zimbabwe set up an NGO called 'Non-Violent Actions and Strategies for Social Change' (NOVASC). NOVASC lends crucial support to other organisations, fulfilling a much needed role in training, support and consultancy work for trade unions, students, resident associations, and women's organisations; it also has worked in training the police in handling conflict (though was banned from this work in 2002) and has done training and consultancy with the 'Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association'. It is also a member of the 'Zimbabwean Human Rights Forum' (ZHRF), of which John was Vice Chair (and briefly acting director) until June 2008. The HRF provides legal representation to victims of political violence. In addition, it is gathering a huge database and documentation of human rights abuses in the country. It is hoped it will play a key part in providing a basis for transitional justice and prosecutions for gross

rights violations in a post conflict period in Zimbabwe's future.

Warning signs

The work that the group has been doing in terms of raising international awareness was responsible for bringing John unwelcome attention from militia and Mugabe's military intelligence. "In March 2008, I was referred to as an intelligence agent of an unnamed power in a newspaper article. Two months later I was referred to as one of the agents of Imperialism." Shortly afterwards, a sister organisation received an anonymous call asking about John and his whereabouts. He realised he was in danger and immediately fled the country. "The people who were looking for me were also involved in the killing of members of the opposition party during April and May just before I left so there were real reasons to leave" says John.

When asked how he copes with such extreme levels of stress in his life, John softly replies, "Not very well. Displacement and exile is hard – of course it affects very many people. (About a third of Zimbabwe's population are displaced, mostly into exile but also many inside the country.) I'm trying to take advantage of what's called 'making a virtue out of necessity'. I want to set up a proper process of reflection, writing about the work I've been doing in the last 20 years." More specifically, John wants to look directly at the way in which violence, coercion and the manipulation of people in politics in southern Africa may be moving towards a different way of doing politics; politics of participation.

Change without violence

NOVASC is part of a global organisation called the 'Non Violent Police Force' (NVPF), which sends civilian peacekeepers into conflict areas in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Sudan. Through the 'Alliance for a United, Plural and Supportive World', John has become a member of 'The Charter Facilitation Team' which is working towards the promotion of The Charter for Human Responsibility. The idea is to reach beyond the concept of human rights and establish why they haven't been implemented, investigating the

underlying ethics of responsibility. Through his work in these two global initiatives, and with the Zimbabwean social movements that are the programme partners of NOVASC, he has been an active participant in the World Social Forum process.

It's clear that one of the biggest challenges facing Zimbabwe is the rebuilding of relationships and trust. "Security cannot be left to the old regime. The police force is still a threatening thing so it would demand a large African police presence to assist in retraining, reorienting and reforming the police, which would need to include former Zimbabwean police currently in exile." Security will be necessary to give Zimbabwe the political space in which to hold a real election in about two years time, albeit probably with the need for international supervision.

While there is much help being provided by the European Union and various NGOs, in terms of food and health, it's not enough – but he cautions that largescale assistance can only be given once real indications of change are seen – such as the freeing of political prisoners and the media (currently national radio and TV is 'state owned' and run by Mr Mugabe's party). There's also the issue of land allocation. Land has become a symbol of the ruling ZANU-PF who seized land from white farmers and distributed it amongst party supporters. John believes that a review of all sectors particularly land, education, health, production and agriculture is needed urgently to ensure that dependency on the outside is reduced. Is he optimistic about the future? "Long term, yes, but it can only happen through hard work. My hopes are not that it will be wonderful, but workable."

While John's experiences of the world may be quite different from that of many people who have been through Downing, our lives are unequivocally connected. It's no longer appropriate to talk about issues of 'crisis' in terms of dependence or independence, but one of interdependence. After all, what affects Africa, Zimbabwe, the survival of rhinos, the price of coal or the value of platinum (Zimbabwe assets) affects us all.

Through the eyes of every woman

A print of Thomas Jones' painting 'A wall in Naples' is the only picture to grace the walls of Dr Simone Laqua-O'Donnell's study. Its subject matter couldn't be more mundane: a crumbling stone wall with some laundry hanging out to dry. But it's the sheer intensity of the artist's gaze that makes it so extraordinary. Similarly, for this Downing Research Fellow in History, the vivid accounts of the lives of ordinary women transform the everyday into the remarkable.

Growing up in Hamburg, Simone would listen spellbound to her father's stories about his childhood in Silesia during the Second World War; she remembers in particular how he spoke with great emotion about the trauma of leaving the home he loved. It was this frank style of storytelling that compelled Simone to explore the lives of ordinary men and women, in all their grit, glory and, yes, even teeth-grinding tedium.

Now an early modern historian, her interest is religious and gender history – particularly the way in which religious reform affected the lives of Catholic women with regards to religiosity, morality, discipline and power in the 16th and 17th centuries. "I don't know why I got so interested in gender," says Simone, "it just seemed like such an exciting field to me. It was still relatively young and many amazing books were coming out, specifically about women's lives in that period."

An undergraduate at Hughes Hall, Simone discovered that there was already a large body of work on Protestant women but barely any existed from the Catholic perspective. Her PhD focused on the city of Münster, which was the northernmost stronghold of the Counter-Reformation in Germany, and almost completely surrounded by Protestant territories, in her bid to examine how the Catholic church attempted to re-establish dogma and orthodoxy in response to the Lutheran challenge. Looking at a variety of women

including servant girls, nuns, married women, widows and clerical concubines, the benefit of focusing on just one city was that, in the absence of family trees, certain characters began to turn up repeatedly in the archival records. "You can trace some of these women, even children, over years," remarks Simone, "they were quite outspoken. They weren't emancipated but they obviously had opinions on what constituted a proper marriage and what made a good husband. They were also preoccupied with how a woman was supposed to behave in public, what her role was in the community, and about moral or immoral behaviour more generally. Quite often these views would differ significantly from those propagated by the authorities, or those held by their husbands for that matter."

Recurring names take on even greater significance when you start to consider the issue of concubinage. Interestingly, the children of these illegitimate relationships in the 16th and 17th centuries did actually get their father's surname. Concubinage was in fact very common. Although the decrees of the Council of Trent forbade priests from having a relationship with a woman, in reality they almost all did. Society, it seems, was surprisingly tolerant. Providing it was a stable relationship, people were quite pragmatic about it as long as the priest fulfilled his clerical duties. In Münster, it took almost 100 years and the emergence of a seminary-trained priesthood to

change this relaxed attitude. Only in the 18th century did people expect their clergymen to live a celibate life.

Putting piety on the map

While looking at the extensive collection of wills in the Münster city archive, Simone found the topic of her next research project. She realised that piety was as much about religious devotion as it was about practical considerations. Early modern people were aware of the many religious choices open to them and made strategic decisions about which monastic orders to support and which charities to provide for. In doing so, they actively shaped social policies in the city. Pious donations even influenced career decisions and professional networks. "Everything was painted in religion," says Simone. "Religiosity was expressed largely in church, but I also think that piety is far more all-pervasive and mundane in many ways, and very strategic in terms of money and economic issues and career advancement. My aim is to write an integrated history of piety which is embedded in social and political history and doesn't regard piety as something that early modern men and women only switched on at the church doors."

Simone now plans to conduct a comparative study of Bologna and Mainz in an effort to draw 'religious maps' of the cities and outline their social and sacred geography. "Comparing these cities, one in the



A portrait of the tom Ring family showing three generations of Catholic painters, Hermann tom Ring, 1548.



Etching by Everhard Alerding, 1636, of the cathedral of Münster and, almost unchanged, today.

heartland of the Counter Reformation, the other across the Alps, will help me to determine how far piety was directed by Rome, the centre and model for renewal in the Catholic world, and how far Catholics elsewhere followed Roman orthodoxy or other movements.”

Fellowship at Downing

Simone recently accepted a lectureship at Birmingham University. So what will she take with her from experience at Downing?

“Being part of the Fellowship is a completely different experience to being a student; suddenly people are expecting you to be a scholar. Thankfully, you have lots of support here. I have a group of colleagues around me working on different topics and periods, all with different questions. You learn how to think bigger. Downing is an amazing resource and a great community, very generous and welcoming. I shall be very sad to leave.”

Biography in brief

Simone Laqua-O'Donnell studied History at Hughes Hall between 1999 and 2002. She went on to pursue her Master's and DPhil at Balliol College, Oxford before joining Downing as a Research Fellow in 2006. She will be leaving at the end of 2009's academic year.

At the University of Birmingham Simone will be a member of the Centre for Reformation and Early Modern Studies and will teach early modern history to undergraduate and graduate students.



Development Office

Apocalypse Now, Catalysis Tomorrow



Nomura in the City of London

On 9 March about 40 alumni gathered for a meeting of Downing's City Group at Nomura in the City of London, to discuss the topic "Apocalypse Now: Banking after the Credit Crunch". Two excellent presentations were given by Nomura employees Bill Tudor John (1963) and Brian Lawson (1976) detailing the period leading up to the credit crunch and its effect on Lehman Brothers and an exposition on the current state of banking and what is needed for the future. Paul Abrahams (1981), also of Nomura, kindly arranged the venue and refreshments.

Although the discussion was both stimulating and engaging, the mood was generally pessimistic with the expectation that further defaults and corporate failures are on the horizon for 2009 and that the worst is by no means over. This has, of course, had a major effect on all those with investments including Downing whose endowment, which provided 27% of the College's income in 2007–08, has been badly hit in common with most other Cambridge colleges.

Given this, it might seem a little odd to be planning a major fundraising campaign; however, that is exactly what we are doing with the aim of raising £20m for the endowment over

five years. At the time of writing we are in the final stages of refining the 'Catalysis' campaign and preparing a brochure. We have consulted a range of old members including the College Campaign Board and Year Representatives, as well as Downing Fellows and have received many wise and thoughtful comments which will be properly represented in the brochure.

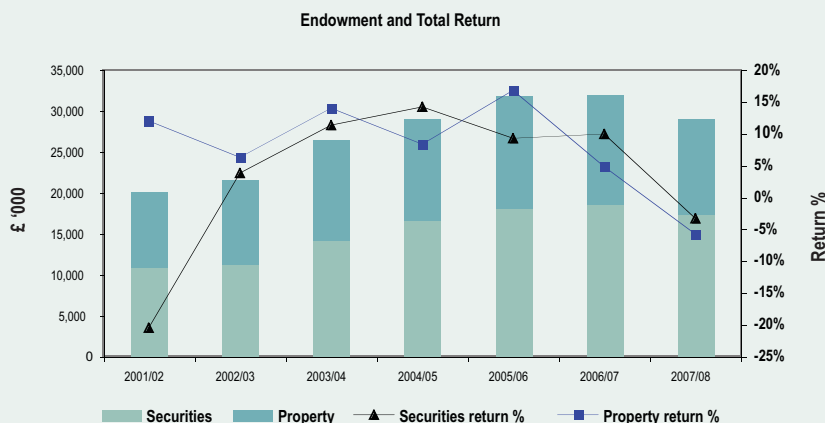
Why 'Catalysis'? Well, this reflects our view that the College is a place which induces change and transforms the lives of those who pass through it and engage with it. As Dr Philip Rubery, Fellow in Biochemistry, puts it: "The College is a living organism that uses energy sources from its environment to grow and develop, creating complex structures and processes. All this depends on catalysis." To do this a catalyst is needed, which is a substance that precipitates change without itself fundamentally changing. The endowment is the catalyst and donations to it are a source of energy which induces catalysis. We also think of our alumni as people who go out

into the world and change it for the better. The endowment underpins the College, which itself remains fundamentally the same, always seeking to be a leading place of learning, teaching, and research.

The campaign will be structured to offer specific and identifiable aspects of the College's endowment for alumni to support and the Catalysis brochure will set out the priorities.

Is this a good time to be asking for money? Well, it is truly amazing that even in these difficult times, Downing alumni continue to be very generous to the College. The magnificent restoration of the Hall was only made possible by hundreds of alumni donating at all levels and 2009 was also a record year for our annual telephone fundraising campaign. Even now, as the recession begins to bite, we continue to receive generous donations from all around the world, for which we are sincerely grateful.

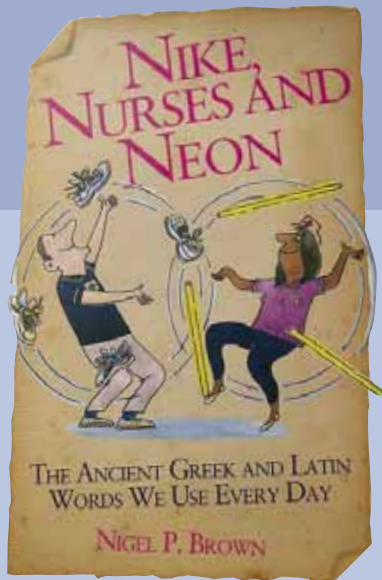
Tariq Sadiq
Development Director





An odyssey in every sense of the word

Even the most ardent football fan might draw the line at painting a kitchen in his team colours but not Nigel Brown. Bold claret walls and light blue lintels betray a keen wit and love of detail. And if this decor isn't devotion enough to his team, he's managed to squeeze not one but six references to Aston Villa into his new book, 'Nike, Nurses and Neon', about the influence of Greek and Latin words in everyday English.



The idea came half way up an Austrian mountain on a skiing holiday. A friend, pointing to a patch of snowy bumps beneath their chair lift, asked him if there was a word for young moguls. "I'd call them proto-moguls" Nigel replied "in the same way that an early design is a prototype", ('prōtos' being the Greek word for 'first'). From that moment he began to notice just how many of the words we use today have their roots set firmly in the classical languages and the idea for a book was born.

Have you ever wondered how the Pacific Ocean got its name or what a Pyrrhic victory is? Written for the non-classicist, the book covers every subject under the sun, from Architecture to the Zoo. Set out as 90 separate topics each one provides insights into how plenty of the words or expressions we use gain an extra slant when you understand their original roots. A case in point is the word 'lens'. We use it to describe the glass in spectacles or contact lenses. So discovering that it is a Latin word

meaning 'bean' comes as quite a surprise but one which gives an insight into the history of lens making. The first lenses in Europe were made by fusing together two pieces of glass to make a lens that was convex on both sides. One of the first people to do this saw the shape as being similar to that of a bean and naturally used the Latin word to describe it.

Written in an entertaining and easily digestible way, the book is erudite (this word can be found in the chapter 'Education') and laced with humour.

Courting controversy

For all its hilarity, it is also academically sound and Nigel doesn't shy away from a challenge when necessary. When researching the origin of the word 'Spa', Nigel grew skeptical about the Oxford English Dictionary and Chambers explanation that it derives from the Belgian town of that name. According to a Roman tour guide his brother knew, it is actually a Latin acronym, S.P.A which stands for Salus Per Aquam, 'health through water'. Unfortunately, the OED will only amend its entries as a result of documentary evidence, of which there is none.

The foreword has been written by Dr Paul Millet, Admissions Tutor and Director of Studies, for Classics, who admitted he was so fascinated by the book that he read it from cover to cover. He even discovered things he

hadn't previously been aware of, not least the fact that his tidbit of choice, the Pontefract cake, has Latin origins. Proof, if it were needed, that we can all learn a thing or two.

'Nike, Nurses and Neon' is published by Metro Publishing.

Biography in brief



Nigel Brown read Classics at Downing from 1976 to 1979, before spending a year training to teach English abroad.

Returning to the UK in 1981 Nigel took up his first post as a copywriter for an advertising agency, specialising in travel accounts, moving back to Cambridge in 1985 to work in-house for another agency with several large science and technology brands.

In 1991 Nigel and two colleagues set up the successful Cambridge-based design and copywriting agency, BBO Creative. He remains a Director and hands-on writer to this day, helping clients both in the UK and around the globe.

Chasing the sun

Blazing 3000km across Australia inside a cramped, sweltering cockpit, dodging irate truck drivers and kangaroos, might not be everyone's idea of fun. For Downing's Laura Hughes and Clare's Anthony Law, part of Cambridge University's first Eco Racing team, it is a once in a lifetime challenge.



The World Solar Challenge is an epic biennial race for solar powered cars, which runs the length of Australia's Stuart Highway, from Darwin to Adelaide. Forty teams from around the world battle it out for the prestige of having made it across the finishing line. The test bed for future solar technology, they will have the eyes of the global car industry fixed firmly upon them. Competition is fierce and the conditions even more so.

Fourth year engineering student, Laura Hughes, is a key member of the University's 15 strong eco racing team (CUER) which is due to fly out to Australia on the 5th September to undertake final preparations before the contest begins at the end of October. The spry yet resolutely focused Laura, a former JCR treasurer and boat club captain, and current women's boat club captain, started by building the

wing mirrors for last year's prototype, Affinity, which has since become the UK's first legal road solar car. This year, she's in charge of aerodynamics, so it's her job to ensure the car experiences as little drag as possible, while still being cooled enough for the solar panels to function.

The heat is on

This is Cambridge University's first foray into solar car racing and it may be one of only two UK entrants this year, alongside UCL. The team hopes to make it home in the top ten, so what challenges are they preparing to face? "There's only one right turn and a cattle grid," grins Laura, "but apart from that it's B road quality from top to bottom. The heat is going to be one of the biggest problems, particularly when you're in a solar absorbing black car! Every bit of ventilation you put in will slow you down."

Laura does have an incentive. Not only is she designing the ventilation but she is also driving – alongside team mates, Kento Taoka, Julian Johnson, and Mike Probyn, all of whom were deemed suitably unhinged and short enough to do it.

"You're almost lying on your back; the sun's beating straight down in your face. Temperatures inside the cockpit can go up to 50°C. It's probably quite horrible." Team manager, Anthony Law, has a knack for understatement. "But the design of a solar car, the trade off between getting the sunlight on the top area and still getting good aerodynamics is a really nice design exercise" he enthuses.

This year's car, Bethany, in all her 5x2 metres glory, is essentially an electric car but a high performance vehicle in every sense. Getting out of it might

require the agility of a Russian gymnast but the very fact that the solar cell area is restricted, limiting the available energy, has led the design team to create an astonishingly effective machine. "The overall efficiency of the electrical systems in Bethany is something like 95%. Compare that with an internal combustion engine, which is about 25% efficient," says Anthony.

The team

The CUER team comprises 75 students and 10 academic advisors. Anthony takes charge of the business side while St. Catharine's laid back Charlie Watt oversees the technical disciplines, which are split into four sub teams: aerodynamics, mechanical, electrical, and strategy and software. Then there is the heavyweight advisory board made up of businessmen, entrepreneurs and academics, who generously share their time, industry contacts and experience.

"We're working with Ben Agathangelou, former head of aerodynamics at Red Bull Racing. He's one of the best aerodynamicists around," says Laura.

The World Solar Challenge is primarily an endurance race. Just keeping the car on the road will prove test enough for the accompanying technical team. A sophisticated telemetry system will transmit hundreds of bits of data from the solar car to the chase car, which along with constant feedback from the driver means that the team can continually monitor what is going on. They are also hoping that the speed optimisation software they will be using, designed by Anthony, will give them the edge by helping them to calculate the most favourable pace to suit specific weather conditions.

The fly in the Swarfega

There is, however, one snag. The team will be travelling to Australia by air, leaving a huge carbon footprint in its wake. They are considering the merits of sponsored carbon offset, and Laura simply hopes that the technology they are developing will more than outweigh any negative effects.

As it is, the budget for the development of this year's car is forecast to be

£250,000, an unprecedented sum for a Cambridge University student project.

But their fund raising efforts are paying off, having enlisted the support of over 20 sponsors, including Hewlett Packard and Cambridge Precision. "We're competing against people with vast amounts of money," says Anthony. "The Michigan solar car team is probably our biggest competitor they spent \$2.5 million on their last car – almost all from corporate sponsors."

Ever resourceful, CUER has recently established the 'Friends of CUER' scheme. So for those of us who have only fantasised about the glamour and



excitement of racing there is now an easy, and far more comfortable, way of getting involved. With just one donation, you can be part of the very fabric of the team, and as Laura and the team race to victory, you will delight in knowing that your name is emblazoned for eternity on the driver's seat cover.



Biography in brief



Laura came to Downing in 2005 and is reading Aeronautical and Aerospace Engineering. During her time at Downing, Laura has been Junior Treasurer of the JCR. She has rowed and played badminton for the College, and this year she is Women's Captain for the Boat Club.

Opening of the Hall



Ioana Marinescu



The College was delighted to unveil the restored Hall at an opening event for donors and supporters on Saturday 14th February 2009. Completing the restoration has been a magnificent achievement, which would not have been possible without the generosity of 758 alumni who supported the project.

EVENTS CALENDAR 2009

Saturday 16 May 2009

MA Awards Dinner (2002 Alumni)

Tuesday 19 May 2009

Cambridge Reception

Saturday 13 June 2009

Donors' Garden Party
(by invitation only)

Saturday 13 June 2009

1956 & 1982 Reunion Dinner

Saturday 20 June

1961 Reunion lunch

July 2008 TBC

Downing City Group Reception

Saturday 18 July

1964 Reunion Dinner

Saturday 25 July

1749 Society Garden Party

Saturday 26 September

Alumni Day and Association Dinner

*Please note that the information above
may be subject to change.*

For further details on any of the events listed, or to find out what else is happening throughout the year, please visit the Development Office website www.downingcambridge.com or contact the Development Office on 01223 334 850 or email dev@downingcambridge.com